

# International Women's Day

**“DigitALL: Innovation and  
Technology for Gender Equality”**

**March 08, 2023**

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# PRAYER WITH AND FOR THE WOMEN OF YESTERDAY AND TODAY

## SETTING

Place the Bible in a visible place and next to it, the names of women from the Bible and women who are significant in our own country.

## INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER

Today we gather to give thanks and pray for women all over the world, for those whose names we know and for those who are anonymous. We shall begin with a prayer for women.

### Prayer

Thank you, God, for being a good Mother and Father for women and for your blessing on their mission in the human community.

We pray for the woman who is a daughter: to be welcomed and loved by her parents, treated with tenderness and gentleness.

We pray for the woman who is a sister: may she be respected and defended by her brothers.

We pray for the woman who is a wife: that she may be recognized, valued and helped by her husband, faithful companion in married life; that she may respect herself and give herself to be respected, so that both may live the communion of hearts and desires that are prolonged in the fruitfulness of a new human life, thus participating in the greatest work of creation: the human being.

We pray for the woman who is a mother: that she may recognize in motherhood the blossoming of her femininity. Created for relationship, may she be sensitive, tender and self-sacrificing in the education of each child; with gentleness and strength, serenity and courage, faith and hope that forge the person, the citizen, the child of God.



@lisa-runnels

We pray for the good and generous women who have given their lives to make our lives.

We pray for women who are lonely, for those who do not find meaning in their lives; for those who are marginalized and used as objects of pleasure and consumption; for those who have been abused and murdered.

We ask this through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Woman, Spouse and Good Mother, full of humble and courageous faith, who accompanies us, sustains us and leads us to your Son, Christ Jesus, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.



## THE UN THEME FOR 2023

The theme set by the United Nations for 2023 is: *“DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality”*.

The life of our society today demands a strong digital integration, and in the wake of the Pandemic even more so, because confinement made it impossible to resolve various issues: communicating with loved ones, attending classes and work, banking, medical appointments, etc. Let us bear in mind that this digital system has remained in place and

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Throughout our lives there  
most cases we owe what we are and what we have: grandmothers, mothers, sisters, daughters, colleagues at school or work, friends, consecrated women, etc.

While many organizations may take to the streets on this day to call for women’s rights, we have the opportunity to spend some time in prayer, remembering some of the women of the Bible, women who were protagonists in the History of Salvation, who gave their unconditional “YES” to God to liberate and give life to the people of Israel. Despite living in a patriarchal system, they never felt excluded from God’s plan. We will also look at some significant women in the New Testament who relate to Jesus in one way or another.

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@Gerd-Altman

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March 08, but every day.  
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[Canción / Fuiste Hecha Mujer - Martín Valverde](#)

## 1<sup>st</sup> MOMENT

### MARY MAGDALENE

The disciples went back to where they were staying. Mary, on the other hand, remained there at the tomb, crying. Still weeping, she went back to the tomb. Then she saw two angels, dressed in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. The angels asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" She answered, "They have taken my Lord away, and I don't know where they have put him". At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. Jesus asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him". Then Jesus called her by name: "Mary!". She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God'. Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news, "I have seen the Lord!". And she told them what Jesus had said to her (cf. John 20,10-18).

she obeys Jesus' command and announces that he is alive.

It is contradictory that in a world where men have the power, Jesus uses this woman to be the first announcer of the triumph of life over death. By this Jesus tells us that those who oppress, kill and exclude, do not triumph at the end.

*(Allow a few moments of silence)*

### Reflection

Mary Magdalene plays a very important role in this proclamation. In the tradition we have known her as the repentant prostitute, although in no gospel she is named as such; we are told that seven demons came out of her. The demons would have made her feel impure, excluded, voiceless, marginalized, full of guilt, subdued, oppressed and unable to learn or overcome.

The encounter with Jesus frees her and a new life begins for her; she feels like a free woman committed to the kingdom of God and to her people. She becomes a disciple, a friend and a companion of Jesus.

The following of Jesus, led her to risk of accompanying him in his moments of suffering and death; she was not even afraid to stand by the cross.

Mary Magdalene is the first person to experience the risen Jesus and to whom Jesus entrusts the mission of announcing him to the other disciples. She discovers her beloved Master alive and her heart bursts with emotion when she hears her name;

## 2<sup>nd</sup> MOMENT OUR FOUNDERS AND THEIR VIEWS OF WOMEN

### The Founders and the Role of Women

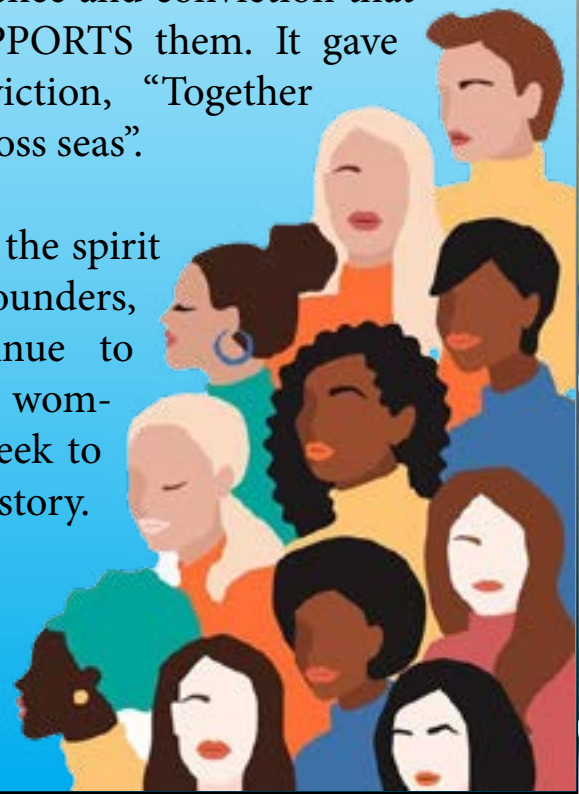
It is interesting to reread the writings of our founders in search of their special relationship with the female figures of their time, the time in which the male point of view still prevailed and in which being a woman protagonist socially was difficult.

We are pleased to discover on how Claret was inspired by the life and sanctity of some women saints. The reading of their lives, affected him so much that he has quoted their words and lives in the autobiography numbers 234 – 241. He aspired to follow the life of St. Catherine of Siena on how she combined in her life action and contemplation. He wanted to imitate St. Rose of Lima who preferred to suffer the pain of hell alone, if that could prevent others from being condemned into eternal fire.

The writings of these women saints motivated Claret to “begin again” and to give himself one more opportunity to grow spiritually and humanly. Claret highlights the sensitivity of women to help their neighbors, and to realize what God asks of them and to which they respond promptly.

Mother Antonia, the Foundress of our congregation (RMI) gives us another figure of a woman. She herself believed that as a woman she could change the world. In her autobiography, she herself tells us about the process she and her first companions went through to overcome the many obstacles that prevented her from fulfilling her dream of serving God. For example, in numbers 125 to 130, she narrates the experience of the vow of unity and how it is a hallmark of her way of giving herself. It is a vow of “fraternal union” based on “trust”. It is not just another vow, but it is the driving force that will sustain and give life to all their projects. This vow will give them the strength to embark on a stormy journey. It gives them the grace and support of God to grow in confidence and conviction that God SUPPORTS them. It gave her conviction, “Together we can cross seas”.

Today, in the spirit of our founders, we continue to support women who seek to change history.



## 3<sup>rd</sup> MOMENT TIME TO PRAY FOR TODAY'S WOMEN

We cannot forget the lives of so many women throughout the world who continue to suffer, deprived of their respect and rights. Let us pray to the Lord of Life for each one of them:

### LORD RENEW THE WONDERS OF YOUR LOVE

1. For all mothers who mourn the death of their children because of violence. **Let's pray**
2. For women who are exploited and abused in their jobs. **Let's pray**
3. For women who are victims of mafias, of trafficking in women, who suffer sexual violence and are treated as objects of pleasure. **Let's pray**
4. For girls who lose their childhood-experience because they have to work to support their families. **Let's pray**
5. For women and girls who are subjected to the political and religious laws of their country. **Let's pray**
6. For single mothers who have to find ways to support their children. **Let's pray**
7. For women who have had to flee their country because of war. **Let's pray**
8. For women who migrate to other countries in search of a better future. **Let's pray**
9. For women living in rural areas whose livelihoods depend, at least in part, on harvesting of wild forest products. **Let's pray**



## 4<sup>th</sup> MOMENT

We end our time of prayer by placing in Mary's hands all the women whom we have remembered and for whom we have prayed. Let us also keep in mind the women who are forgotten by the world.

### Women's Creed

- I believe in the God of the women of the Bible, the God of Sarah, Rachel, Hagar, Judith and Mary.
- I believe in the God of Carmen, Lucia, Gianina, and so many others who knew how to see their mission in life.
- I believe in the God who hears the cry of so many women who are abandoned, lonely, lost their children; marginalized, entangled in the problems of life.
- I believe in the God who created life, who gave women the capacity to generate it and the sensitivity to care for it and defend it.
- I believe in the God who has given ability to women to make the world more humane, to lessen the pain, death and destruction.
- I believe in God who has created woman and man with equal dignity to assume together the task to build a New Society.
- I believe in Mary, the Woman and Mother, who is filled with the Holy Spirit. I believe that she brings life and hope, and opens the way to go to her son Jesus.
- I believe in eternal life without discrimination, where men and women of all races and places, will sing the joyful song of Equality, Fraternity and Love without end. Amen.

[Canto / María mujer fuerte - Salomé Arricibita](#)

